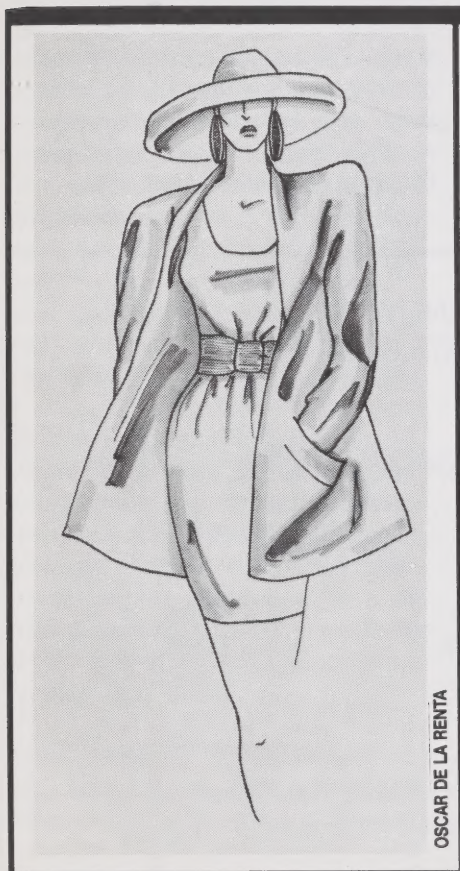


INTO THE FUTURE

What is the long term prognosis for the retail community, and who will be the survivors in the battle for consumer dollars? A recent report entitled "Retailing 2000" from Management Horizons, a division of Price Waterhouse presents a dramatic picture of the industry's future: "In the final ten years of this century, the environment and character of retailing will be drastically transformed...it will

change perhaps as much in one short decade as it has in the last hundred years or more. Industry wide, retailing today is a victim of its own long history of success and is paying a penalty for its most recent history of excess. There is too much retail space for the market, too much copycat sameness among retailers, and far too much leverage on the books. These conditions leave no room for marginal performers. BY THE END OF THIS DECADE,

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SALUTE TO SPRING

It's been quite a while since so much attention has been given to the "day suit." Shapes and colors of today's ensembles echo the vitality of those found three decades ago. Yet there's a '90s sophistication that places the look here and now. The message is short—although the image evokes "white gloves and pearls," skirt length remains thigh-high. Color is infused into all of the collections, with graphic combinations in an assortment of brights. And the dress, experiencing a revival this Spring, often replaces the skirt.

At OSCAR DE LA RENTA, the dress with a coordinated topper plays a major role for day. In sunwarmed neutrals and icy pastels, he presents streamlined shifts and high-waisted chemises. Fabrics have texture in

ribbed piques, crisp linens, wool crepes and silk failles, twills and jerseys. The traditional skirt and jacket shows up in tri-color horizontally striped versions of lightweight wool.

BILL BLASS pours on the brights in eye-popping ensembles and versatile combinations. Color-blocked suits are in red, pink, orange, and yellow; while perky florals are paired with cool navy and white stripes. Details are definitely noticeable with oversized rick-rack trim on all-over floral suits, and big colorful zippers closing little jackets. Sophisticated pastels are in pale pink or green with white as the base.

CAROLINA HERRERA "thinks pink" with a number of soft sculptured suits in silk and wool crepe. A

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MORE THAN HALF OF TODAY'S RETAILERS WILL BE OUT OF BUSINESS." This gloomy prediction goes on to present a scenario depicting "destination stores" which will be owned by a few major players, operating a group of distinctive stores, each targeting a specific customer's needs. These stores will be "significantly" larger than our present specialty stores to accommodate "expanded merchandise categories" for the "targeted" customer. They further pronounce The Limited as the "harbinger of things to come." The specialty retailer, that is a "destination" store like The Limited, will be the most likely to survive the industry shakedown.

And, the edge in the market held by the specialty retailer is not mere theory. In an analysis of retail performance for fiscal 1989, WWD reporting an overall rise of 1.5% on profits over the previous year for their listing of 40 major retailers, also attributed much of that increase to specialty and discount groups. They recorded specialty store profits increasing for '89 by 28.2%, with the highest return-on-sales up from 4% to 4.5%. The report singled out the strong performances by The Limited and The Gap (among four) as being responsible for "pacing" the specialty group. Additionally, Fortune Magazine recently described both of these companies (together with Toys "R" Us, Wal-Mart, Dillard, JCPenney, Nordstrom) as "the new rulers of retailing." "They are succeeding by developing exciting merchandising programs, finding innovative uses of technology, and expanding smartly and aggressively," reports Fortune's Susan Caminiti. "Debt for these market-share masters is a measly percentage of sales. That gives them the financial strength to weather the hits and misses of the industry without jeopardizing business." Obviously, the business strategies of these two giants warrant attention.

In 1963, Leslie H. Wexner started his empire with a \$5,000 loan to finance a single store, The Limited. In 1969, The Limited issued its first publicly traded shares, after topping sales of one million the year before. By 1976, there were 100 such stores, and in

1980, the retailer was listed on the New York Stock Exchange. Its return to investors during the '80s averaged 53.1% per year, and it led the Fortune's list of 50 top retailers. In their 1989 Annual Report, Wexner, chairman of the board, explains the company's success:

"Quantity never drives anything, quality does. So we achieve and measure success qualitatively not quantitatively...Substance, real skills, real knowledge, and execution are what make our business work. How do you keep yourself agile and quick when you're a 10 billion dollar enterprise? The answer is you can't. You have to be an aggregation of companies that think small. That's why we keep these new businesses entrepreneurial. Each business takes responsibility for its own destiny, with independent teams of merchants, marketers, store operators, distributors, accountants, and information specialists."

These businesses that make up The Limited empire are diverse. The Limited, a division of The Limited Inc, is expected by year's end to operate 780 stores nationwide. It features some of the fastest-growing private label sportswear in U.S. history. Express, introduced in 1980 carries sportswear and accessories described as appealing to those "on the cutting edge." Express For Men was launched in 1987 with the Express stores. Victoria's Secret, acquired in 1982, is the world's

largest brand of intimate apparel, with more than 350 shops. There is also a Victoria's Secret catalog division which has a circulation of over 50 million. Henri Bendel was acquired by the Limited in 1985, and caters to women with upscale incomes, offering international designer clothing and accessories. Other divisions include Lerner (women's private label apparel), and Lane Bryant, a large size division, together with Bryland, their women's plus size apparel catalog. Abercrombie & Fitch, a 1988 acquisition, features a chain of stores showcasing classic men's and women's sportswear and gift items.

The Limited stores are presently undergoing expansion in order to increase sales volume. The average size of The Limited store expanded from 3,570 square feet in 1985 to 10,600 square feet in 1990. Likewise, Compagnie Internationale Express increased from an average 2,370 square feet in '85 to just over 7,000 in '90. As a result of this upsizing and the clustering of The Limited's seven divisions, they have become a force to be reckoned with at shopping centers across the country. They are attracting the kind of business normally associated with mall "anchors"—traditionally department stores. "From our customer's point of view, which is the only point of view," says Wexner, "our strategy worked. The productivity and profitability of larger format stores is

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DID YOU KNOW THE STATISTICS FOR:

THE INCREASE OF RTW SALES OVER LAST YEAR

	SPECIALTY	DEPARTMENT
Women's	9.6%	5.7%
Children's	16.1%	7.3%
Men's/Boys'	6.1%	5.3%

From 1990 Edition of National Retail
Federation's Merchandising & Operating Report

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magenta double-faced wool 3-piece suit, with jewel neckline, is trimmed in braided pink silk crepe. The bubble skirt is re-introduced on sundress and jacket ensembles, in toast or white cotton gazar. Cotton jacquard, ottoman, and pique are used in bolder combinations of 2-piece dressing in contrasting colors.

Louis Dell'Olio gets graphic with his collection for ANNE KLEIN & COMPANY. With the Op Art appeal of checkerboards, awning stripes, and color-blocking, a group of day suits in red/black/white and kelly/black/white comes alive. Pairing these prints in a number of combinations, he sometimes trades the skirt for a slim pant or sleek sheath, all in wool crepe. Zipper closures and matching checkerboard accessories complete the look.

At CAROLYNE ROEHM, red, white, and navy are her primaries with brown replacing black. A navy wool crepe empire pleated chemise is topped by a red double-faced wool jacket for a crisp look. A different texture comes into play for the day suit, with white or brown cotton canvas, often trimmed in red leather and paired with red separates.

Marc Jacobs uses color and contrast for his collection at PERRY ELLIS. Checks, plaids, and stripes are paired together in several ways. Gingham ensembles dip into the '50s in aqua/ivory and beige/ivory combinations. A navy and white "ticking-stripe" group is smart and sophisticated; and color comes forth in coral suitings paired with poppy print separates.

Texture becomes the focus at REBECCA MOSES. Raffia linen, wood beads, sequins, and guipure lace accent a group of neutral cotton suitings. Brights are in linen with interesting shapes such as the short petal jacket over bare dresses, or the tapered "9-dart" jacket worn with a "peek-a-boo" skirt.

For CHARLOTTE NEUVILLE, jackets are collarless, streamlined, and zippered. Paired with matching skirt, ensembles explode with color and



texture. Cotton sateen, cotton poplin, and a silk/cotton "couture twill" make up a number of suits in solids, stripes, and a hand-painted tile print—very mod. Color-blocked checks are in a silk/wool boucle.

RANDOLPH DUKE prefers monochromatic dressing in "cool wool" suits of saffron, lavender, mango, and pistachio. A "harness" detail on jackets and dresses, wrapping around the bodice, is very modern. Menswear patterns are feminized in

houndstooth, herringbone, and paisleys; and navy pinstripes have detachable white pique dickies.

While some designers look toward the past, and others become a bit more futuristic, the day suit remains the most important ensemble for Spring 1991. Common threads are the clean lines, short length, and revitalization of the dress. With so much versatility, this season's collections are appropriate both for the office and for the "ladies who lunch."

THE EUROPEAN VIEW

While Milan and London work on the premise that in an uncertain economic climate the best strategy is to take few risks, Paris focuses on spectacular and uncompromising designs.

Because the French price their resort and diffusion lines (which are made for the customer's basic wardrobe) competitively to maximize sales, the designers have the luxury of making spectacular statements on the runway. These often radical ideas affect the mainstream of fashion over the long term and, by moving it forward, become its lifeblood.

COLORS: White - from head to toe, all shades of pink, '60s brights, sea green, turquoise, coral, bright red, ice cream pastels, neutrals, navy, and black.

FABRICS: Cotton and stretch pique, waffle pique twill, ultra fine gabardine, light weight flannel, raw and iridescent silk, poplin, Moroccan and georgette crepe, warp weave taffeta, muslin, chiffon, organza, organdy or gauze—plain or patterned, lace, fishnet, raffia, macrame, textured and intarsia knits, stretch covered with sequins, vinyl, and patent leather.

continued on page 4

PATTERNS: '60s Op and Pop Art, Pucci prints, graphics, stripes, checkerboards and large diamonds, big polka dots, paisleys, florals (from mini to grand), large leaves, and African inspired prints.

EMBROIDERIES: Braid, gold and multi-colored gem motifs, lace appliques, and spangles.

TRENDS: '60s Retro! **DRESSES** (from baby doll to shirt), the most important component—tents and trapeze, A-line and chemise, pinafores, sundresses, lingerie and tank tops. Bare midriffs, cutouts, one shoulder, sleeveless, strapless, covered fronts and open backs, are the order of the day. **JACKETS**—worn with or without skirts. **SKIRTS**—long and full for after five! **SUITS**—the staple in all collections. **SHORTS**—in every length and width for day into evening. **THE BIG WHITE BLOUSE.** **BODY HUGGERS**—cat suits, jumpsuits, bicycle shorts, stretch jersey minis, sarong skirts. **COSTUMES**—coats/dresses, dress/jackets, jackets/trousers, shorts. **BRA TOPS and CORSELETS.** **TIGHTS**—from Pucci prints to basic black. **LOOSE OVER TIGHT.** **COLOR BLOCKING and BI-COLORS.** **NAUTICALS.** **TRIMS**—zippers, lace, big buttons, piping, and scalloping. **SEQUINS and BEADS**—day or night.

MILAN DESIGNER FOCUS

ARMANI: Milan, as always, belongs to Armani, whose soft, mannish suits have become an Italian signature. He includes classic long jackets over draped or wrapped skirts, blazers in supple silk (over a wrap-over white blouse) topping short shorts, and stamped mock crocodile leather cardigans over slip dresses. For late day, simple one shoulder or strapless dresses juxtapose with coat dresses encrusted with tiny beads and crystals, that open to reveal crystal edged short shorts.

LONDON DESIGNER FOCUS

VIVIENNE WESTWOOD: With Katherine Hamnett and John Galiano off to Paris, the spotlight in

MAXIMUM IMPACT

It's all about color and form—beautiful color and uncontrived shapes. This season, accessories take a back seat to the clothes, and in truth this cleaned up approach looks refreshing after the over ornamentation of the Fall collections. The overall mood is inspired by the early '60s with a touch of the '50s. Jackie Kennedy, Babe Paley and Audrey Hepburn are the epitome of this look.

The big trend for day is the dress. Trapeze, swing, or shift, always pared to the bone, with a jacket or without, and frequently shown in crayola bright colors. When accessories appear, they're confined to the minimum for maximum impact. **BILL BLASS** revives the short pastel kid glove, and shows it with a group of easy shifts striped in pink or pistachio with white. At **OSCAR DE LA RENTA**, a gold linen coat and matching scoop neck chemise is shown with 4-button white gloves. Gloves surface again at **BETSEY JOHNSON**. Short and perky, white banded and bow trimmed black cotton matches a ladylike '50s sheath.

London fell on the Designer of the Year, Vivienne Westwood. Her ideas flow against fashion's mainstream. While skirts elsewhere have gone about as short as they can go, hers are long and prim. She delves back into the 16th century to come up with slashed fabrics that give tufted texture to wool and a new life to denim.

PARIS DESIGNER FOCUS

CHANEL: Lagerfeld updates the classic suit with vibrant colors and curvy tailored jackets, paired with leggings or short skirts. Also of interest, his sequinned surfer jackets and lingerie inspired short cocktail dresses.

MONTANA: He dominates with precise modern dressing—body-

The jewelry focus is on earrings. Simple shapes for day, dramatic after dark. At **ISANI**, gold button earrings turn up with shocking pink and navy luncheon ensembles. He cuts loose at night with a hot pink satin organza swing coat flung over a chartreuse sequinned crop tank and shorts, and adds jazzy sequinned shoulder dusters. Clear or frosted crystal earrings (alone or paired with matching bracelets), in bold free form shapes turn up repeatedly. Some of the best: **REBECCA MOSES'** matte finished seashell earrings and cuff bracelet shown with ivory crepe and silk knit separates; **GORDON HENDERSON'S** chunky clear lucite bangle and earrings that he shows with a clean white cotton knit shift and raffia blazer; and **CAROLINA HERRERA'S** frosted crystal and gold drop earrings that complement an elegant yellow silk evening column with jeweled sleeves. Shoulder dusters and drop earrings continue in importance, especially for evening. **BOB MACKIE** adds a chalk white tropical flower to earrings comprised of row upon row of cascading pearls, and

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conscious apparel clings, A-line tunics are cut in front to reveal short skirts, and simple midnight navy evening dresses create a dramatic finale.

ST. LAURENT: His collection is a mix of his signature tailored suits, and tiny cocktail dresses with vibrant splashes of color in huge pom poms on the hip or shoulder! An extravagant finale is inspired by the colors, fabrics, and shapes of North Africa.

VALENTINO: A beautiful flirty collection reminiscent of the '60s, featuring tailored suits in pale ice cream colors, jewel encrusted short cocktail dresses, and slim and elegant strapless crepe evening dresses.

pairs them with a white silk georgette strapless gown. For all out glamour, pearl chandelier earrings accompany his cream/gold brocade taffeta gown with ornately beaded bodice in a sunburst motif. Some of the most beautiful and unusual earrings appear in MARY McFADDEN's Fra Angelico inspired collection. Outstanding—a coral marii pleated dress under a water color printed chiffon coat, shown with delicate translucent pastel crystal shoulder dusters. And an oversized gold bird in flight, holding a faceted topaz drop in his beak, is paired with a pale pink sequin and pistachio pleated cocktail dress for an interesting juxtaposition of colors.

Necklaces serve as witty accent pieces. Silver is the mineral of choice at RONALDUS SHAMASK. A geometric pendant suspended from a thin silver chain accents a nectarine silk linen apron and iridescent silk pants. CAROLYNE ROEHM fashions a bright bead choker, ties it with a perky bow in back, and sends it down the runway with a blue/turquoise/green knit tunic and skirt. The choker reappears at BOB MACKIE's in elaborate form. Jewel encrusted gold sets off a gown of metallic reembroidered lace and sweeping crushed metallic organza.

Women will kick up their heels in a variety of shoes. The Spring color palette features soft pastels, neutrals, and white, to complement the sheer hose seen everywhere on the runways. Sling backs, mules, thongs, and strappy sandals prevail. Echoing the trend in RTW the '60s revival influences footwear. While high heels remain strong, flats and mid-range heights look new. Color-blocking, metallics, satin, and suede appear everywhere. Some of the best: MARY McFADDEN's curved mid-heel gold kid sling backs; REBECCA MOSES' ivory satin mules and white patent thongs; BILL BLASS' bi-colored navy/white mules with curved Louis heel and his classic beige suede pumps; ADRIENNE VITTADINI's bronze metallic thongs; LAURA ASHLEY's polka dot/stripe espadrilles, and finally—SHAMASK's Gigli-inspired



flat slippers.

Topping off the collections was an array of headwear, from '60's inspired headbands and wrapped and tied scarves "a la Audrey Hepburn," to a variety of summer straws and frivolous cocktail hats. MARIBEL GARCIA presents dramatic wide brimmed straws in stark white with everything from swimsuits to suede separates, while DONNA KARAN's simple navy straw accompanies her yellow/white/navy color-block wool crepe "strapless" wrap jacket and matching red skirt. SCAASI BOUTIQUE runs the gamut, from a white guipure lace sailor hat shown with a red/white/navy late day ensemble in silk crepe, to a flirty sequinned anemone hair ornament

that matches his sequin print dress. LAURA ASHLEY updates the classics with a crisp white jacket, navy and white dotted shorts, and tops it off with a navy banded and bowed natural straw boater. ADRIENNE VITTADINI places her brimmed natural straw over a grass green wrapped and tied scarf, adds sunglasses (another ubiquitous accessory) and shows this with a bright green tunic and skirt. Hats are an integral part of OSCAR DE LA RENTA's Spring. Giant woven natural or colored straw pagodas are worn throughout the collection. An outstanding example is the gold straw with peaked crown shown with a chocolate, gold, and white striped wool suit.

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undeniable. What we are finding...is that even larger stores are in our future."

Expansion is also a part of The Gap's retail strategy. In their 1989 Annual Report, Millard S. Drexler, president, and Donald G. Fisher, chairman and CEO state:

"Increasingly our stores are becoming 'destination' or 'convenience' shopping locations. This is true of both our mall and neighborhood or downtown stores. We intend to capitalize on this aspect of our business, opening 150-160 new stores during the coming year, as well as enlarging approximately 20 of our most productive Gap stores. New Gap stores will be larger, on average, than in the past."

New stores will be 8,000 to 10,000 square feet instead of the previous average size of 4,200 with existing stores expanded where possible.

The Gap, a fast growing giant founded in the late '60s by Fisher, had 167 stores in 1976 with some 99 million in sales. At the end of fiscal year 1989, the company, which operates under four trade names, Gap, Gap Kids, Baby Gap, and Banana Republic, incorporated a total of 960 stores in the U.S., U.K., and Canada. It is listed for trading on both the New York and Pacific Stock

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Exchange. Originally conceived to offer basic jeans and workshirts to the young consumer sector, today it is a specialty retailer that features casualwear for men, women, and children. Over the years their customers, who matured, demanded a more sophisticated selection of merchandise. Millard Drexler, who came on board in 1983, recognized that and transformed both the image and the store design. In an interview with the Los Angeles Times last year, Drexler explained that the company was seeking "a little older audience. We want to appeal to the customer over thirty. Our image was very young... We feel we're a company that carries clothes that everyone wears." And according to a U.S. Census Bureau report on population trends, the median age is rising, from 27.9 in 1970 to its present figure of 33. It is predicted to continue to rise to 36.4 in the year 2000, which seemingly makes The Gap's change of marketing strategy a smart move.

But, how will these two empires fare in the face of economic recession? Will their marketing strategies hold up? Walter F. Loeb, president of Loeb Associates, a retail consulting firm, in a recent speech to the Retail Marketing Society described both The Gap and The Limited as part of a group of companies who aggressively "gain share of market," even in a recessionary market. Although one does not expect the 1990 balance sheets from either of these independent specialty retailers to look quite as rosy as last year's, the chances are



NRF's STORES MAGAZINE ANNUAL RANKING OF TOP 100 SPECIALTY CHAINS

2nd Place— THE LIMITED
at 4.6 Billion. 14.6% increase over prior year

8th Place— THE GAP
at 1.6 Billion. 6.7% Increase over Prior Year

From 8/90 Edition

that both The Limited and The Gap will be less impacted by the current recession than most retailers.

"Specialty stores will be reinvented to encompass an expanded mix of merchandise in larger stores that will make a more powerful marketing statement to target customers," predicts the Retailing 2000 report.

"These specialists' strategies will depend on getting a larger portion of the shopping budget of a smaller, but more loyal customer base." Judging from their past and present case histories, clearly, The Limited and The Gap have anticipated this changing retail picture and are ready to meet it head-on.

COLORS/FABRICS

FALL '91 PART II

At all of the recent fabric shows, technology was the star. It was new fibers, new finishes, new blends, and new techniques.

Stretch was in almost every line at Premiere Vision, Moda in Tessuto, and The New York Fabric Show. Lycra was seen in almost every fabric type. It was knitted, woven, puckered, flat, textured, patterned, printed, and jacquarded.

Micro-fibers continue to be important—tightly woven, strong, lightweight, soft to the touch. Multi-fiber blends are very evident. They merge the best characteristics of each fiber. It's no longer poly/cotton or rayon/linen; it's 3 to 6 fibers in one fabric.

Peach skin finishes and sueded or emerized surfaces continue in popularity. Coated surfaces, oiled finishes are also selling, and aged looks give a rustic, worn appearance to basic fabrics. Dry handed fabrics are in evidence and should grow in popularity. At the moment, most are fluid and drapable, with a few crisp handed fabrics beginning to sell.

Forget traditional seasons. Linen is selling for winter, wool for summer. Winter linens are heavy, oiled, coated, quilted, or blended with wool. One firm promoted their linens with a notice about the fact that Russian army jackets are made of linen. Their booth was very crowded.

At all three shows, most of the best selling fabrics were soft to the touch, fluid and drapable. Carded wools were in evidence. These were frequently blended with mohair, angora, cashmere, or cashgora. Shetlands, boucles, color flecked tweeds, and meltons were some of the other popular fabrics in this sector. Twill fabrics continue in all weights, from light shirtings to suiting weight

gabardines, flannels, cavalries, and herringbones. Waffle textures, honeycombs, and basket weaves were some of the more rustic textures in evidence. Denim and canvas were two sporting favorites. These were often double-faced with a print or contrasting color on one side. Many had coordinating lightweight counterparts. Chenille was another standout. It was knitted, woven, used in tweeds, appeared in lacy open patterns or jacquards. It was stripped, shaggy, used in cut patterns on sheer weights, and frequently combined with Lycra. Pile fabrics were also selling, from rich velvets and velveteens with hammered, crushed, or panne surfaces to casual corduroys and velours. Thick Sherpa type pile fabrics and fleeces were also pop-

ular—as long as they didn't try to imitate a real animal. Perhaps the fake leopard has run its course. Light dress and blouse weights saw a preponderance of crepe. Many crepes have a dryer hand, but are still very fluid. Challis was still much in evidence, sateens and poplins look newer. Knitted fabrics were on the rise. Silky, lustrous, shaggy, stretchy, double, single, and interlock knits were selling. Diamond and cable patterns, Kilm rug designs, block patterns, velour knits, velvet surfaces, jacquards, and chenille knits were the standouts.

Pattern-wise, misted checks and soft tonal patterns were the preference. Diamond shapes were in many lines, and color blocking turned up frequently. Iridescent and heathery grounds appeared in low-key patterns or in plain weaves. Ethnic prints were reminiscent of Eastern Europe, Nordic influenced, or picked up patterns from Mexico, the American West, and the Orient. The ubiquitous floral was a strong seller. Roses were especially popular.

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DESIGNER FOCUS. . .

JENNIFER BAWDEN

Jennifer Bawden, a native Canadian, is a graduate of Western University in Ontario, and the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles. After working one year as assistant designer for Frank Usher, Ltd. in London, she returned to New York where, four seasons ago, she premiered her formal collection of dressy day and eveningwear. Bergdorf Goodman was the first to recognize her talents, showcasing her designs in their Fifth Avenue windows. Others soon followed, including I. Magnin, Martha International,

and Fred Hayman of Beverly Hills. Her dresses are currently gracing the November issue of *Cosmopolitan* and December's *New Woman* magazine. Also available to do custom designed gowns for stores, she will create couture one-of-a-kind pieces. "They can pick their own exclusive fabrics and designs at a wholesale cost of \$1000-\$2000," explains Jennifer.

Her Spring collection exudes romance and glamour. Delectable ice cream tones, some with metallic accents, are translated into silhouette skimming or form emphasizing dresses and ensembles. The latter, while decorative, are also deliberately functional, and ingeniously designed to flatter and disguise imperfect body contours. The palette encompasses baby pink, light yellow, light peach, beige, and off-white. Fabrics include 4-ply silk crepe, silk chiffon, white cotton jacquard, gold lame, and novelties. One group which travels easily from day to evening features a shapely sophisticated dress in silk crepe, draped gracefully with silk chiffon across the neckline at

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fabrics continued

These came in all sizes, were nostalgic and romantic, appeared in mini calico designs and wallpaper stripes. Batik and marbelized grounds turned up as a setting for floral prints. Sampler styled flowers were another look in many leading print lines. Patchworks took on many forms and frequently combined elements from different eras or settings. Geometrics often took on Art Deco shapes and colorations. Fractured abstracts, flame stitch patterns, splattery patterns, and Modern Art inspiration were much in evidence. Popular conversational themes were Dick Tracy, Polar regions, fairy tale castles, space stations, and hunting scenes. Most were very sophisticated. Classic print patterns continue to be best sellers. Here paisley designs, medallions, and mini cravat designs were the hot sellers.

For late day into evening, metallics and luster lead the way. Lace, faille, and satin, elaborate jacquards with a tapestry feeling, embroidery, crepe, chiffon, and georgette were popular. Most of these were also selling in stretch versions.



designer focus continued

front, and cascading down the sides after crossing over in the back. Another dress which Jennifer describes as a "perfect second wedding dress," is sleeveless and detailed with softly draped chiffon on the lower portion, which is attached and punctuated with self-rosebuds. Chiffon sweeps out in flutes on the high Princess-line of a dress, which offers the option of soft pastel or multi-pastel flutes. A short sleeved bolero jacket in silk crepe tops a dress with high pleated bodice and swirling chiffon skirt. A black silk crepe tuxedo dress is adorned with ornate crystal buttons down the front. What Jennifer calls her "showstoppers" are in the glamorous evening group. Standouts include an evening suit in a gold/pink novelty brocade incorporating an oversized jacket (lined in thick pink satin) with romantic gathered drop shoulders. Its details incorporate semi-circular concave pockets and triple-step collar. Coordinating is a high-waisted mini-skirt, which pleats from a turndown peaked waist panel. In a novelty fabrication, multi-pastels on a silver base enhance a sexy little dress with an ultra-dipping sweetheart boned bustier. Another dress with a similar silhouette but modified dip, attaches pleated chiffon at one of its spaghetti straps which doubles as a gossamer stole. In a gold/silver/pastel jacquard novelty print (a soft romantic version of the Pucci style), an elegant bustier dress projects a '50s feel with its long split overskirt.

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